

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
EB-08 COME-00 DLOS-09 FMC-01 AF-10 TRSE-00 OMB-01
OES-07 DOTE-00 /097 W
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R 171029Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5940
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL BREMEN

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EWWT, GW, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIET/GERMAN SHIPPING TALKS

REF: BONN A-309 (1977)

SUMMARY: FIVE DAYS OF SOVIET-GERMAN DISCUSSIONS ON THE
ROLE OF SOVIET SHIPPING IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC AND EAST
AFRICAN TRADE ROUTES PRODUCED NO CONCRETE RESULTS FOR
THE GERMANS. BILATERAL SHIPPING HAS NOT BEEN A PROBLEM,
BUT SOVIET RATE CUTTING IN THE CROSS TRADES HAVE HURT
THE GERMANS, WHO SEEK TO HAVE THE USSR JOIN NORTH
ATLANTIC AND EAST AFRICAN CONFERENCES. THE SOVIETS
CLAIM THE US ATTORNEY GENERAL'S RULING HAS BLOCKED THEIR
ENTRY INTO THE NORTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCES. HOWEVER,
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THE FRG TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY SAID THE USSR IN
DECEMBER APPLIED TO ENTER THE NORTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE
COVERING THE HAMBURG-US NORTH COAST ROUTE. FURTHER
DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE TO TAKE
PLACE IN MOSCOW IN SEPTEMBER, 1978. END SUMMARY

1. FIVE DAYS OF TALKS (JAN. 23-27) IN HAMBURG BETWEEN

USSR AND FRG GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS PROVIDED NO CONCRETE RESULTS FOR THE WEST GERMANS. MINISTERIALDIRIGENT DR. CHRISTIAN WOELKER (RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COORDINATION OF INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC POLICY) OF THE TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY LED THE FRG DELEGATION; DIRECTOR AVERIN OF THE FOREIGN SECTION OF THE OCEAN FLEET MINISTRY HEADED THE USSR SIDE. THE TALKS WERE A DIRECT RESULT OF THE OCTOBER, 1977 MOSCOW MEETINGS BETWEEN FRG TRANSPORT MINISTER GSCHIEDLE AND HIS SOVIET COUNTERPART, MINISTER GUSHENKO.

2. EMBOFF DISCUSSED THE TALKS WITH WOELKER WHO SAID THE FRG'S MAIN CONCERN WAS TO HAVE THE SOVIETS ENTER THE NORTH ATLANTIC AND EAST AFRICAN CONFERENCES. HE CLAIMED THAT SOVIET SHIPPERS, OUTSIDE THE CONFERENCES, ARE CHARGING AT LEAST 10 PERCENT LESS TO CARRY CARGO IN THE CROSS TRADES, I.E., BETWEEN WEST GERMANY AND THIRD COUNTRIES AND THAT SOVIET SHIPS NOW CARRY 11 PERCENT OF ALL NORTH ATLANTIC CROSS TRADE CARGO. WOELKER ASSERTED THAT ON THE EAST AFRICAN ROUTE (THE BESTA LINE) THE USSR DEMANDS 12.5 PERCENT OF ALL TRADE WHILE THE CONFERENCE MEMBERS, INCLUDING GERMANS, REGARD 7-9 PERCENT AS APPROPRIATE. HE STATED THAT DURING THE MEETINGS THE USSR CONTENDED THAT IT WISHES TO ENTER THE NORTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCES BUT COMPLAINED THAT THE US ATTORNEY GENERAL'S RULING THAT SOVIET ENTRY WOULD REMOVE COMPETITION AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CREATE A MONOPOLY SITUATION HAS EFFECTIVELY PLACED A US VETO ON THE SOVIET DESIRE. (NOTWITHSTANDING THIS SOVIET COMPLAINT, AN FRG TRADE MINISTRY OFFICIAL TOLD US THAT, IN DECEMBER, THE USSR DID APPLY TO ONE NORTH

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ATLANTIC CONFERENCE (THE HAMBURG/BREMEN-US NORTH COAST ROUTE) FOR ENTRY ON TERMS AGREED UPON IN MID-1977.

THE GERMAN OFFICIAL FELT THAT INCREASED OUTSIDE COMPETITION ON THIS ROUTE WOULD CURTAIL FURTHER US VETOES.)

3. WOELKER SAID BILATERAL OCEAN SHIPPING TRADE WITH THE USSR WAS SATISFACTORY, WITH BOTH SIDES OPERATING UNDER THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL PARTICIPATION. HE REMARKED THAT BONN PREFERS THE SOVIETS ENTER THE CONFERENCES UNDER REASONABLE CONDITIONS BUT IF MOSCOW CONTINUED TO BALK, THE FRG HAD LEGISLATION LIMITING GERMAN PORT CALLS BY ANY FOREIGN NATION, INCLUDING THE USSR. THE FRG FOREIGN TRADE LAW PERMITS IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS LAW TO PROTECT SECTIONS OF THE GERMAN ECONOMY FROM FOREIGN ECONOMIC SYSTEMS. WOELKER NOTED THAT GREAT BRITAIN, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM ALSO HAD THIS LAW AND THAT THE FRG CABINET, IN SEPTEMBER, 1977 HAD DECIDED TO INVOKE THE LAW IF NECESSARY.

4. ALTHOUGH THE MAIN TOPICS OF THE DISCUSSIONS CONCERNED CROSS TRADE COMPETITION AND THE CONFERENCES, THE DELEGATIONS ALSO TOUCHED UPON OTHER ISSUES SUCH AS THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CONFERENCE LINERS, THE TRANSPORT OF GOODS IN BILATERAL TRADE, THE TRANS-SIBERIAN LANDBRIDGE, AND THE ISSUE OF SHIP AGENTS. THESE TOPICS WILL BE COVERED IN GREATER DETAIL DURING THE SEPTEMBER, 1978 MEETINGS IN MOSCOW.

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